

New York Dec 27. 1839

Geo. S. Stevenson Esq }
Newbern N.C } Dr Sir

Your very kind letter of 23 inst is at hand this morning read with astonishment I am perfectly surprised that any person should accuse either my partner or myself with having the least affinity with abolitionism. I had supposed my position was too well defined, for any one, even the worst enemy I ever had, to accuse me of being an abolitionist. I have always taken strong open ground, against them any & every where. So much so, as to make enemies here. My father, sister & families are residents of Wilmington & both slave holders. Is it reasonable to suppose, with my affection & most of my interest South (leaving love of Country out of the question) that I would entertain, much less express feelings inimical to the South or her interests?

No Sir, it is a mean, base slander, which no honorable man would be guilty of. I would just as soon be accused of theft as to be called or believed to be an abolitionist. I do not know who the individual is, that would give such an impression, but whoever he is, I say he states what is not so, & if he knows me, he knows it to be an unmitigated falsehood. The only connection that I ever had, with anything that has the least appearance or taint of those detestable principles is this

Some of our ministers had so far forgotten their sacred calling, as to use their position to extend their antislavery views. This became offensive to many of the lay members, who thought that ministers, if called to preach the gospel had no business in the political arena or to use their pulpits to disseminate antislavery doctrines. I joined an association called the "Preachers & Laymen's Union" composed of those ministers & lay members who are opposed to slavery agitation. I was asked if my name might be used in furtherance of this object. I not only cheerfully consented, but promised my influence & means to bring about the desired result. The association published a circular to which they attached my name, with others. Had I seen the circular before publication I should have objected to having my name used, but only on the ground that it was not half strong enough in condemning the course pursued by these Political Religious ministers. I am happy to believe that this association has already accomplished much good in arousing the laity & getting them to act in such a manner as to convince those agitators that their course is in opposition & offensive to their members & not included in their call to preach the gospel. I thank you cordially for the information you gave & if it is ever in my power to promote your interest please command me (B)

I wish you would do me the favor to contradict
any such reports whenever & wherever you
hear them.

If you can consistently give me the name
of the individual who was base enough to
sland me merely to advance his own sel-
fish purposes I should like to get it.

I will again repeat, the assertion or insinuation
that I am an abolitionist, either in thought, word
or deed, is false from beginning to end. Not one
particle of truth in it, and ^{the} individual, if he knows
me wished to create any such impression
knew he was trying to do what was utterly false
mean & detestable. A lie from beginning to the end.

Yours Truly

E. Potter of D. P. H.

P.S.

As a proof, if any was necessary, that we are not the
least tainted with abolitionism we could refer
to Doct. Masters of your town. It is some years since
we corresponded with him, but he will no doubt
recollect us.

Y.R.

H & Winer
& Potter

Dec

bound in the office
of G. S. Stearns
when in the S. S. Stearns
Captains room of
Newbern
N.C.